

Applicant : Niall R. Lynam
Serial No. : 10/709,434
Page : 2

Remarks:

The amendments and remarks presented herein are believed to be fully responsive to the Office Action dated November 6, 2006. Claims 1-11 are pending in the application.

CLAIM REJECTIONS

Claims 1-5, 8 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Schmidt, U.S. Patent No. 6,030,084, in view of Gillich et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,709,119. Claims 6, 7, 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Schmidt, in view of Gillich et al., and further in view of Wheatley et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,262,894.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for the reasons set forth below.

With respect to the rejection of independent claim 1 in view of the combination of Schmidt and Gillich et al., Applicant submits that this combination does not disclose, teach, suggest or render obvious the wide angle reflective element of the present invention, particularly as set forth in independent claim 1 and in the claims depending therefrom, for at least all of the reasons set forth in the previous response, the arguments of which are incorporated herein.

As previously stated, the combination of Gillich et al. and Schmidt also does not disclose or teach or suggest a thin flexible glass sheet as is disclosed and claimed in the present application. To the contrary, the protective layer 101 of Gillich et al. is a hard coat similar to the hard coats discussed and distinguished in the background section of the present invention. In stark contrast to the thin flexible glass sheet of the claimed invention, and as discussed in the background section of the present application (see page 1, paragraph [0002] of the present application), such hard coats are provided (such as via dip coating or vacuum deposition or the

Applicant : Niall R. Lynam
Serial No. : 10/709,434
Page : 3

like) on the first or outer or exterior surface of the reflective element which is contacted by the exterior elements. The hard coat of Gillich et al. thus is not a thin flexible glass sheet, such as the thin flexible glass sheet 20 shown in Figure 5 of the present application, as is clearly evident by the disclosure in Gillich et al. that the hard coat of Gillich et al. has a maximum thickness of 1,000 nanometers (see column 2, lines 32-36 of Gillich et al.). Such a hard coat thus is less than 1×10^{-9} millimeters thick and thus such a hard coat is not providable as a thin flexible sheet as disclosed and claimed in the present application. As stated in the background section of the present application, such a hard coat will not provide the benefits of the claimed invention.

Further, the hard coat of Gillich et al. is disclosed as being applied to the body by deposition in vacuum or by thermal vaporization or by electron beam vaporization or by sputtering or by plasma polymerization or by chemical vapor deposition (see column 7, line 66 through column 8, line 12 of Gillich et al.). Such a hard coat thus is not provided as a thin flexible sheet and thus does not have an attaching surface for adhering to an exterior surface of a polymeric mirror substrate so as to provide an anti-abrasion sheet at the outboard and inboard surfaces of the exterior surface of the polymeric mirror substrate.

The Office Action states that "the coat of Gillich et al. is also taught as being a sheet which can be rolled", and directs the Applicant's attention to column 8, lines 28-37 of Gillich et al., which states:

"The transparent layers, and here in particular the protective layer, can also be obtained by a flame pyrolytic method. It is also possible to use different processes for the individual layers of a sequence of layers.

For example, in the case of rolled products, e.g. foils, strips or sheets, or in the case of laminates containing an aluminum layer, individual coatings or preferably all coatings are applied or deposited in a continuous process, usually the belt or continuous process, also known as coil coating." (emphasis added).

Applicant : Niall R. Lyman
Serial No. : 10/709,434
Page : 4

The Office Action thus points to the statement "in the case of rolled products" and states that this provides a teaching of providing the hardcoat (disclosed as being less than 1,000 nanometers thick) as a "rolled product". However, Applicant submits that the statement quoted above is referring to the case of rolled substrates, and not rolled coatings. As evidence of this, Gillich et al. states that, in the case of rolled products, the individual coatings or preferably all coatings are *applied or deposited* in a continuous process. Moreover, in the sentences immediately following the above quoted portion of Gillich et al., Gillich et al. further states:

"To produce the pretreatment layer, for example, processes for anodic oxidation of aluminum can be applied. The functional layer a) e.g. a sol-gel layer, can also be applied in a continuous process, in which the sol is applied to the surface to be treated by immersion, spraying, etc. or by coil-coating, and dried or hardened by subsequent radiation and/or heat treatment in a through-type furnace. Finally, the reflective layers b) can be deposited by vaporization, sputtering, etc., in both cases especially in a vacuum etc." See column 8, lines 37-45 of Gillich et al. (emphasis added).

Thus, Gillich et al. discloses providing a rolled substrate and coating the rolled substrate (such as via immersion, spraying, vaporization or sputtering) via a continuous coating process. Thus, Applicant submits that there is no disclosure or suggestion in Gillich et al. of a thin flexible glass sheet, and there is no disclosure or suggestion in Gillich et al. of providing a thin flexible glass sheet that has an attaching surface that is opposed to and adhered to a polymeric substrate surface, such as is claimed in independent claim 1 of the present application. Therefore, the combination of Schmidt and Gillich et al. does not disclose, suggest or render obvious the invention claimed herein.

With respect to the rejection of dependent claims 2-11, Applicant submits that the combination of Schmidt and Gillich et al., either alone or in further combination with Wheatley et al., does not disclose, teach or suggest the claimed invention for at least all of the reasons set forth above.

Applicant : Niall R. Lynam
Serial No. : 10/709,434
Page : 5

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that neither Schmidt nor Gillich et al., either alone or in combination with one another or with any other prior art of record, disclose, teach, suggest or render obvious the wide angle reflective element of the present invention, particularly as set forth in independent claim 1 and in the claims depending therefrom. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-11 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-11 remain pending in the application. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-11 are in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is earnestly and respectfully requested. Should the Examiner have any questions regarding the above discussion, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney to discuss this further.

Respectfully submitted,

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